

STAKEHOLDER OUTREACH SUMMARY

May 16, 2013

This memorandum summarizes the highlights from the stakeholder interviews conducted as a part of the Juanita Drive Corridor Study. These interviews were conducted in Spring 2013 and were intended to inform key stakeholders about the project, identify key issues that should be addressed in this project (from the stakeholders' perspective), and better understand how stakeholders felt their organization, as well as the public, could influence the project moving forward.

PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS:

Below, we list each of the stakeholders interviewed and their specific interest in the project.

- **City Manager's Office, Planning Department, Public Works** – Key departments leading future planning, budgeting, and infrastructure management.
- **Joel Pfundt, Transportation Commission Chair** – Citizen-led body that makes recommendations on transportation policy to the City Council.
- **Lake Washington School District** – School District that includes Finn Hill Middle School, Carl Sandburg Elementary School, and Discovery Community School, which are located in the planning area.
- **Jon Pascal, Finn Hill Neighborhood Association (FHNA)** – Juanita Drive is a primary travel route through the Finn Hill neighborhood.
- **Sue Stewart, King County Metro Safety Officer (KC Metro)** – Two King County Metro routes utilize Juanita Drive. In addition, KC Metro is interested in ensuring that the corridor has long-range transit compatibility.
- **Kris Overleese and Kent Vaughan, City of Kenmore** – The City just completed their own Juanita Corridor Study north of our project limits and are keenly interested in a smooth transition between the two projects.
- **Joey Pellechia, Waste Management** – Waste Management services this corridor on a weekly basis, which requires negotiating the existing geometrics with large vehicles.
- **Bryan McNaghten, Kirkland Police Department** – Responsible for providing emergency services along the corridor and nearby neighborhoods.
- **Ivan Huld, Kirkland Fire Department** – Fire station #25 is located along the corridor and provides emergency services to the Finn Hill Neighborhood.

- **Pierre Geurts, Juanita Point Community Beach Association** – A Finn Hill resident with children who attend nearby schools and president of an organization charged with promoting use of a community beach with access off of Juanita Drive.
- **Sheldon Haber, Bastyr University** – The University is located at the northern limits of the corridor. Many of their students, faculty and visitors commute through this corridor using various modes of transportation.
- **Adjacent residents** – Use the corridor regularly to live, work, and play.
- **Businesses located on the corridor** – Patrons and employees use the corridor daily.
- **FHNA and Juanita Neighborhood Association Board Members** – Representatives of the key neighborhoods that will be affected by this project.
- **King County Parks, Saint Edwards Park** – Representatives from parks that are located along the corridor.
- **Cascade Bicycle Club** – Organization of cycling enthusiasts, many of whom use the corridor on a regular basis.

KEY ISSUES:

Below, we summarize the key issues identified by stakeholders for this project. For issues that are stakeholder specific, we identify the source.

- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety** – This issue was raised by most stakeholders as the primary issue that this project should address. KC Metro, Bastyr University, and FHNA identified the need to provide complete multimodal facilities (wide sidewalks, bike facilities, marked/controlled pedestrian crossings, more modal separation) in the vicinity of bus stops, schools, parks, and commercial centers. Bastyr University also hopes these improvements will encourage increased use of alternative modes of transportation. In a similar way, Pierre Geurts suggested off-corridor improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities, especially considering routes children take to/from schools.
- **Opportunities and Constraints** – All stakeholders recognized a key role of this study will be to identify opportunities and constraints along the corridor. Noted constraints included topography, limited right of way (ROW), and functional needs (garbage pickup, mail delivery, etc). Noted opportunities included better visibility, ways to connect with trails and other community amenities, providing marked/controlled crossings, accommodating transit in the long term, creating a green corridor, and potentially limited expansion of ROW in key locations. Jon Pascal noted the potential of developing a unique set of street standards for Juanita Drive, which differs from other roadways in Kirkland. A few stakeholders also noted that off-corridor improvements should be considered, such as access to private driveways that influence how vehicles approach the corridor (albeit this is not a conventional practice).

- **Traffic Concerns**- While most people agreed that traffic congestion is not a major problem along the corridor, there are side streets where it is difficult to find a gap in traffic to turn onto Juanita Drive during peak hours. Some people noted that the traffic signals at intersections in Juanita are not timed well. The city has already been investigating this concern.
- **Large Vehicle Needs** – KC Metro, Bastyr University and Waste Management described the needs of buses and garbage trucks, which are some of the corridor’s larger users. Garbage trucks are 10’ wide (including mirrors). They have to back into driveways and have a rule that the trucks must be 100% in the roadway or off the roadway (no straddling the travel lane and the shoulder) – additional pull out locations would be appreciated. KC Metro buses require a minimum of 11’ lanes to serve the corridor. Bastyr University has a shuttle for students and faculty that uses the corridor. Sight distance on the corridor is very short – providing 8-10 seconds sight distance is ideal. KC Metro and Waste Management have offered to provide design review in this project.
- **Timeline for Implementation** – Several stakeholders indicated a strong desire to see near-term safety improvements (0-5 year horizon). Jon Pascal expressed an interest by FHNA to see this study “set the table” for addressing a variety of issues along the corridor (safety, multimodal connectivity, congestion, etc) over a longer horizon. Bryan McNaghten stated that Juanita Drive is the top corridor regarding safety concerns for the police department, so any improvements completed sooner would be better.
- **Transition at Kenmore City Limits** – The City of Kenmore shared that they had recently completed a Juanita Corridor study from the Kirkland city limits north towards SR 522. While the published study includes a wide cross-section with sidewalks and bike lanes on either side of two travel lanes, staff noted that ROW and funding constraints will influence what actually gets built. The current thinking is that the segment in front of Bastyr University would include the following cross-section: 5’ SB bike lane, 11’ SB travel lane, 11’ NB travel lane, 6’ NB bike lane, 6.5’ NB sidewalk.
- **Emergency Response** – Both the fire and police departments expressed their interest in how the alternatives will impact emergency response times. They recognize that potential roadway improvements, such as extended medians, may impact response times or emergency vehicle mobility but may be a needed compromise to improve overall safety within the corridor.
- **Connectivity** – Connectivity is a broader neighborhood issue but it was mentioned by some people in the context of providing access to and from Juanita Drive and alternatives to Juanita Drive. Currently, many people must use Juanita Drive for local trips since many of the other streets are not connected. For example, this topic came up with respect to a desire by some to connect (either by vehicle and/or by foot or bike) lower Finn Hill with upper Finn Hill without having to travel on Juanita Drive.

- **Automobile Safety** – Several stakeholders expressed their concern for, and have witnessed, speeding and traffic accidents in the corridor. The police department frequently patrols this area for people speeding. However, accidents typically occur during the evening, with the most serious being a result of either speeding or impaired drivers. According to the police department, the section of Juanita Drive that seems to be the most dangerous is between 132nd Street and 120th Place; southbound traffic seems to drift to the east. Limited sight distance for drivers was also raised as a concern by several stakeholders. One other safety point mentioned was the effect of inclement weather and icy roads in the winter. During the winter, many of the trees block the sun and keep the road icy longer than other roads. This condition is compounded by all the turns and hills.
- **Being Context Sensitive** – Many stakeholders noted the rural context of the corridor. While building sidewalks and bike lanes is a typical approach to upgrading a roadway, they were concerned with how this would impact the corridor’s character. Similarly, high levels of property access that is currently provided within the corridor offer a double-edged sword. Reducing the number of access points could help simplify the roadway geometrics and more easily address the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists, but would limit accessibility for existing uses. Many stakeholders noted that increasing capacity is not a solution.
- **Impacts of Tolling** – Several people were concerned about the potential impacts of SR 520 tolling on Juanita Drive volumes. They want to know what the impacts are and how the city is investigating this issue.

INFLUENCING THE DECISION:

We asked each of the stakeholders how they believe their organization can or should influence the outcome of this study. Responses from each stakeholder are provided below.

- **Finn Hill Neighborhood Association** – While not leading the study, it would be beneficial to get FHNA to be advocates for the study. Their support is critical and could be gained through attending FHNA meetings and having co-City/FHNA meetings to give community members opportunities to provide meaningful input. Multiple people from FHNA could be included on the advisory committee, representing different parts of the neighborhood. Finn Hill Neighborhood leaders asked about how this study does or does not address the long term vision for the corridor. This topic is tied to discussions with the city regarding the need for creating a broader neighborhood plan.
- **King County Metro** – KC Metro would appreciate inclusion in this process to ensure Juanita Drive is transit-friendly. While transit only has a minor presence today, this could change 10-20 years in the future. They would like to be on any email distribution lists, review deliverables, and attend meetings that address issues relevant to transit.

- **City of Kenmore** – The city would like to remain informed. If there is a mailing list, requested that they be added to it. Phone calls and emailed drawings of ideas at key milestones would also be appreciated.
- **Waste Management** – Waste Management recognizes their role as a City contractor. While they would defer to community interests, they would appreciate the opportunity to review and provide design critique on interim deliverables. Email is a good way to contact them.
- **Kirkland Police Department** – Would like to remain involved in the identification of issues and review of potential alternatives.
- **Kirkland Fire Department** – Would like to remain involved in the identification of issues and review of potential alternatives.
- **Juanita Point Community Beach Association** – Would like to remain involved and offered to assist in sharing information distributed by the City via the email list serve and website.
- **Bastyr University** – The University has a history of participating in large planning efforts, mostly with the City of Kenmore since the school is one of the City’s largest employers. They expressed an interest in having a similar role for this planning effort.

PUBLIC PROCESS/ADDITIONAL INPUT:

Other potential stakeholders that were named in interviews that could be consulted:

- St. Edwards State Park
- Friends of St. Edwards State Park
- Bastyr University
- OTAK, the consulting firm that lead Kenmore’s Juanita Study.
- EMS (police and fire)
- School bus operator for Lake Washington School District
- Newly-formed eastside greenways group
- Metro’s Planning (David Hull, Victor Obeso, or Sharon Sleebodnick)
- Eastside Audubon